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ABSTRACT

New York City's Project TRAIN offers parents of high school students of limited English proficiency (LEP) an opportunity to improve their English-language skills. The targeted language groups are Spanish, Haitian Creole (the largest group), Khmer, Korean, and Chinese. Classes are offered at four sites around the city. In 1985-86, the second year of the program, English as a second language (ESL) classes were offered at all four sites, and General Equivalency Diploma preparation classes were offered at three sites. The project served a total of 334 participants, most of whom improved significantly in ESL. Proposed activities were not implemented uniformly at all sites. More coordination is needed and these specific recommendations are offered: (1) the proposal should be revised to broaden the target population; (2) participants should be screened to determine if they meet minimal eligibility criteria for entry; (3) evaluation objectives that require the tabulation of high school grades and attendance should be deleted; (4) the Vanderveer Community Catholic Center should be monitored to assure more consistent service at this site; and (5) record-keeping and data collection should be adequately performed. (KH)

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PROJECT TRAIN

1985-1986

OEA Evaluation Report

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O.E.A. Evaluation Section Report

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Grant Number: G00-840-2152

PROJECT TRAIN

1985-1986

Project Director:
Mr. Angelo Gatto

Prepared by the
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A SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

Project TRAIN, in its second year of operation, proposed to offer 210 parents of high school students of limited English proficiency (LEP) an opportunity to improve their English-language skills. The targeted language groups were Spanish, Haitian Creole, Khmer, and Korean. This goal was to have been achieved through regularly scheduled classes in English as a second language (E.S.L.), General Equivalency Diploma (G.E.D.) preparation, and workshops on bilingual education. The program was to have been offered at three high schools and three community centers. To encourage parent attendance, the project also proposed to provide childcare services.

The project employed fifteen staff members. These included the project director, two full-time parent training specialists, nine part-time parent trainers, one part-time office aide, and two part-time babysitters.

The project began operating at the Vanderveer Community Catholic Center in Brooklyn in September 1984; two other sites, Walton High School in the Bronx and the Haitian Neighborhood Service Center in Manhattan, began operations in January 1985. In its first year, 331 parents were served (315 Haitians and 16 Hispanics).

In September 1986, the project was launched at P.S. 124 in Manhattan for Chinese-speaking parents. In October, the Young Women's Christian Association (Y.W.C.A.) in Flushing, Queens, was established as the site for Korean parents; in December, the Khmer component was implemented at the Khmer Buddhist Temple in the Bronx. In its second year the project served a total of 334 participants: 206 Haitians, 55 Chinese, 25 Koreans, 25 Cambodians, and 23 Hispanics.

E.S.L. classes were offered at all sites; G.E.D. classes were offered at Walton, the Haitian Center, and the Vanderveer Community Catholic Center. The results of pre- and post-CREST tests, which were administered at the Asian language sites, show statistically significant gains in E.S.L. Data to assess improved parental awareness of student needs and improvement in their attitudes were collected for only 89 Chinese and Korean parents, and indicate that their attitudes toward bilingual education improved significantly. Data to assess achievement on the G.E.D. examination were not provided. Extracurricular activities and parent meetings were organized at half the sites. Newsletters were developed in Spanish and Haitian Creole. Curricula on bilingual methodologies had yet to be developed and translated into the native languages of parents.

The following recommendations are offered for improving the program:

-- revise the project proposal to broaden the target population;

-- screen participants to determine if they meet minimal eligibility criteria for entry;

-- delete evaluation objectives that require the tabulation of high school grades and attendance;

-- monitor the Vanderveer Community Catholic Center to assure more consistent services at this site; and

-- ensure that record-keeping and data collection are adequately performed.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The production of this report, as of all Office of Educational Assessment/Bilingual Education Evaluation Unit reports, is the result of a cooperative effort of regular staff and consultants. In addition to those whose names appear on the cover, Eulalia Cabrera has interpreted findings and has integrated material into reports. Arthur Lopatin has edited the reports following the O.E.A. style guide and has written report summaries. Finally, Joseph Rivera, Marcia Gilbert, Bruce Roach, Gladys Rosa, and Martin Zurla have worked intensively as word processors to produce and correct reports. Without their able and faithful participation, the unit could not have handled such a large volume of work and still produced quality evaluation reports.

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PROJECT TRAIN
(PARENT TRAINING INSTITUTES OF NEW YORK CITY)

Central Office Location:	Office of High School Projects 1171 65th Street Brooklyn, New York 11219
Year of Operation:	1985-1986, Second Year of Title VII Funding
Participants:	334 Parents
Participating Sites:	
Khmer Buddhist Temple Marion Street (197-198th St.) Bronx, New York	Walton High School 196th and Reservoir Avenue Bronx, New York 10468
P.S. 124 40 Division Street New York, New York	Haitian Neighborhood Service Center 2465 Broadway New York, New York 10025
Y.W.C.A. 42-22 Union Street Flushing, New York	Vanderveer Community Catholic Center 1404 Foster Avenue Brooklyn, New York 11206
Target Languages:	Spanish, Haitian Creole, French, Khmer, Chinese, and Korean
Project Director:	Angelo Gatto

I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

PROPOSED PROGRAM

Project TRAIN is a multisite parent training project in its second year of operation. The project's basic goal is to offer parents of high school students of limited English proficiency (LEP) an opportunity to improve their English-language skills. It proposed to offer regularly scheduled classes in English as a second language (E.S.L.) and General Equivalency Diploma (G.E.D.) preparation, as well as workshops on issues related to bilingual education. The project also proposed to develop booklets on bilingual education in the parents' native languages and to

publish newsletters on activities for parents. The underlying idea was that if parents had a better understanding of bilingual education, they would relate more effectively to their children.

TRAIN proposed to serve 210 Hispanic, Haitian, Cambodian, Chinese, and Korean parents at three high schools and three community centers. Thirteen staff members were to implement project activities. Finally, to encourage attendance, the program proposed to provide childcare services to participating parents.

CURRENT IMPLEMENTATION

By the spring of 1985, the project had been implemented at Walton High School in the Bronx, the Haitian Neighborhood Service Center in Manhattan, and the Vanderveer Community Catholic Center in Brooklyn. By the spring of 1986, the project's Asian component had been implemented at P.S. 124 in Manhattan, the Young Women's Christian Association (Y.W.C.A.) in Flushing, Queens, and the Khmer Buddhist Temple in the Bronx.

In its first year, the project served 210 parents fully and 121 parents partially, for a total of 331. Three hundred fifteen were Haitians, of whom 287 attended the Vanderveer Community Catholic Center and 28 attended the Haitian Neighborhood Service Center. The remaining 16 parents were Hispanics, all of whom attended Walton. In its second year, the project served 334 participants: 206 were Haitians, of whom 26 attended the Haitian Neighborhood Service Center and 180 attended the Vanderveer Community Catholic Center; 23 Hispanics attended Walton High School; 55 Chinese speakers attended P.S. 124; 25 Korean speakers attended the Y.W.C.A.; and 25 Khmer speakers attended the Khmer Buddhist Temple. However, data on participant characteristics were available for only 93

participants, all of whom were Asian. Of these, 39 were from Hong Kong, 25 from Korea, 20 from Cambodia, eight from China, and one from Taiwan.

The project was centralized under the jurisdiction of the High Schools Division of the New York City Board of Education. The project director, who headed six other Title VII programs, was responsible for administering the project, supervising staff, planning activities, and conducting parent workshops. The Title VII staff also included two full-time parent-training specialists, one to oversee the project's Haitian/Hispanic component and another to oversee the Asian component. Both parent-training specialists had many years of experience in education and community service work. Their responsibilities included organizing, testing, and placing parent participants; providing curricula and materials for classes; and organizing workshops and activities. The parent-training specialists also coordinated the activities of the nine part-time parent trainers who taught the E.S.L. classes that were offered at all six sites and the G.E.D. classes that were offered at three sites.

The part-time parent trainers included four Haitians, two Chinese, one Hispanic, one Korean, and one American for the Cambodian site. All but one of the parent trainers were employed full-time as bilingual teachers in the New York City Public Schools and therefore were acquainted with the needs of bilingual students. The American parent trainer was a teacher hired to teach E.S.L. at the Cambodian site.

Additional staff for the project included one part-time office aide in the central office, and two part-time babysitters at one of the sites.

The program's overall implementation and its instructional activities varied from site to site, depending on the nature of the host institution

and the on-site director's philosophy of bilingual education. At P.S. 124 in Manhattan, Chinese-speaking parents were offered classes at two levels of E.S.L. two nights per week. The Y.W.C.A. in Flushing, Queens, offered Korean parents two evenings of E.S.L. per week. At the Khmer Buddhist Temple, the Cambodian parents met all day Saturday for E.S.L. The Haitian Neighborhood Service Center offered a Saturday session that included four hours of G.E.D. in French and one hour of E.S.L. At Walton High School, Hispanic parents met two nights a week; once for E.S.L. and once for Spanish-language G.E.D classes. At the Vanderveer Community Catholic Center, Haitian participants were offered three E.S.L. levels, high school equivalency in French, high school equivalency math in French and English, and a literacy class.

The Vanderveer Center is the only site that did not follow the academic calendar of the New York City Public Schools. Vanderveer used a trimester system consisting of 10 weeks in the fall, six weeks in the winter, and 10 weeks in the spring. New students were permitted to enroll for each trimester. This system had been established at Vanderveer prior to Project Train's affiliation with the center. According to the Vanderveer Center's director, this schedule is suited to the needs of a population characterized by a high degree of mobility into and out of the neighborhood.

The fact that the P.S. 124 and Walton High School sites offered evening classes to parents whose children attended these same schools during the day, helped to strengthen the parent-school relationship. On the other hand, the community center sites provided the parents valuable social services, such as immigration counseling, job information, and

newsletters written in the native languages. All the sites were accessible, had enough classroom space, and were supportive of the project's aims. Three of the sites had been changed from their originally proposed locations. The Khmer site was shifted from Walton High School to the Khmer Buddhist Temple, which is also a community center for Cambodians, because it was believed it would attract more parents. The Korean site moved from the badly overcrowded Asian Education Welfare Center (A.E.W.C.) to the Y.W.C.A. in Flushing. Like the A.E.W.C., the Flushing "Y" was a Korean community center and published a Korean newsletter. The site for Chinese-speaking parents was moved from John Bowne High School in Queens to P.S. 124 in Chinatown because it was closer to the homes of many of the parents.

II. PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS

Although parents with at least one child in a high school bilingual program were the project's target group, in practice many participants did not have children in a bilingual program. Some did not even have children. Consequently, the project director decided that the proposal needed to be revised to include parents of children in primary and junior-high school bilingual programs, and possibly older siblings of children in bilingual programs as well. This change has not yet been made.

The majority of the participants were recent immigrants who came to the U.S. to benefit from economic and educational opportunities not available in their homelands. Most participants were highly motivated to become proficient in English. Data indicate that participants were enrolled for an average of 58 days (S.D.=20.6) but were absent only for an average of three days (S.D.=7.8).

Of the 93 participants for whom data were available, 48 attended P.S. 124, 25 attended the Y.W.C.A., and 20 attended the Khmer Buddhist Temple. Seventy-three (79 percent) were females and 20 (21 percent) were males. Almost half (46 percent) spoke Cantonese, 27 percent spoke Korean, 22 percent spoke Khmer, and five percent were native speakers of Mandarin.

The educational background, skills, and needs of the participants varied from site to site. According to the parent-training specialist and the parent trainers, the participants in the Haitian Neighborhood Service Center program were young adults with an average age of 25. They had attended school up to the ninth or tenth grade in Haiti, had a good knowledge of French, and were preparing to take the G.E.D. examination in French. The Haitians at the Vanderveer Community Catholic Center ranged in

age from 20 to 50, had poor educational backgrounds, and were speakers of Haitian Creole, rather than French. One staff member commented on this group's poor standard of living and its need for special assistance in learning English.

The majority of the participants at Walton were Hispanics from the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico, and had poor educational backgrounds. Most were illiterate in Spanish. Even though they had lived in the U.S. for several years, they tended to remain within their ethnic communities and consequently had little occasion to use English. However, they said they were anxious to learn English so they could communicate with fellow Americans, and be able to earn higher wages.

According to the Asian parent-training specialist and the parent trainer for the Chinese-speaking parents, most of the Chinese-speaking parents had received some education in Taiwan, Hong Kong, or China. Those from Hong Kong were the best-prepared to learn English because of their previous educational experience. It was also reported that the most recent immigrants were frequently financially hard-pressed and consequently had the least time to devote to their studies. The Asian parent-training specialist reported that male participants were having a more difficult time learning than females because they had to work longer hours and would come to class tired.

The Korean participants come from educated backgrounds; this facilitated their learning English. The Cambodian participants, all of whom were female, had widely varying educational backgrounds; some had hardly any formal schooling. According to the parent trainer, some of these

individuals and their families had been traumatized by severe political repression and violence in Cambodia.

III. FINDINGS

This section presents the assessment instruments and the test results used to evaluate participants' achievement and attitude change in 1985-86. The findings are presented by evaluation objectives, as proposed to and accepted by the Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs, U.S. Department of Education.

The project also proposed that the high school-aged children of all parent participants would achieve passing grades in E.S.L., native language arts, and content-area subjects; would demonstrate improved attitudes toward school; and would improve their attendance rate. However, the project director decided not to collect the data necessary for evaluating the achievement of these objectives because it would entail tracing students in many of the city schools. This process would be difficult and impractical. Therefore, these objectives are not addressed in the findings.

INSTRUCTIONAL COMPONENT

English As A Second Language

-- By June 1986, eighty percent of the parents will master an average of one objective per four weeks of treatment using the Criterion Referenced English Syntax Test (CREST).

This objective could not be assessed, as the data were not systematically kept by the teachers.

Attitude Change

-- By June, eighty percent of the parents will demonstrate an improvement in attitude toward bilingual education as indicated on an appropriate education attitude scale.

-- By June, eighty percent of the parents will demonstrate an increased awareness of bilingual high school students' problems and needs as indicated on an appropriate inventory scale of pupil problems and needs.

Project-developed pre- and post-attitude and awareness surveys were available in Chinese, Korean, and Khmer. However, these scales are of questionable validity, particularly since students can see their pretest rating when the same form is returned for the posttest. Therefore they were not used to measure the objective. (See Appendix A for the English version of the questionnaires.)

General Equivalency Diploma

-- By June, forty percent of the parents studying for the General Equivalency diploma will pass the examination.

G.E.D. classes were offered at Walton, the Haitian Center, and the Vanderveer Community Center. Data for Walton and the Haitian Center indicate that of 40 parents, 17 took the G.E.D. and 12 parents passed it. Thus 30 percent of those studying for the G.E.D. passed the examination, and the objective was not achieved. But, half of those students were enrolled for 18 days and the rest for 37 days; hardly enough time to learn all that is required for the G.E.D. examination.

NON-INSTRUCTIONAL COMPONENT

Extracurricular Activities

-- By June, eighty percent of the parents will participate in one high school function/activity every two months as indicated by attendance records.

Data were not provided to show that parents had participated in parents' meetings or school activities at the Haitian and Hispanic sites. Because the parent-training specialist was absent, workshops and meetings

could not be organized. However, parents interviewed at Walton High School reported that they had visited their child's school on parent's day.

Project activities, such as parents' meetings and workshops, were organized at all the Asian sites. Parent meetings were scheduled on a monthly basis to discuss school issues, students' needs, and other related topics. Attendance lists from these meetings show an 80 percent attendance rate.

Materials Development

-- As a result of the program, booklets will be developed in English and each native language in methodologies used in bilingual education at the high school level.

-- As a result of the program, newsletters (two per year) will be developed and published about Project Train in English and native languages and disseminated to project parents and other interested parties.

By June 1986, the proposed booklets had not been developed and disseminated. A guide to the New York City public schools, containing basic information on the school system and city, had been developed and translated into Chinese by the Asian parent-training specialist, but it had not been published because of a copyright dispute.

Of the proposed newsletters, by May 1986 only French and Spanish newsletters describing the activities of the Haitian and Hispanic sites had been developed.

Staff Development

The project proposed to provide a series of training sessions to meet the needs of participating staff members. Sessions were to include pre- and in-service workshops, conferences, and presentations on special issues.

One parent-training specialist reported that monthly staff meetings, monthly workshops, and semi-semesterly pre-service workshops for staff development had been held. Well-organized training kits were developed for both the parent training specialists and the parent trainers. These included objectives, job descriptions, instructional objectives, and sample lesson plans.

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Because of the absence of one of the parent-training specialists, the proposed activities were not implemented uniformly at all sites. Progress made since 1984-85 included the hiring of the Asian parent training specialist and the successful implementation of the Asian component of the project. Parents interviewed during site visits expressed enthusiasm for the project and reported they had a greater understanding of their children's educational experience.

However, in order for Project TRAIN to better fulfill its proposed objectives, the project needs coordination. At present, there are two persons who work independently on different aspects of the project. They need a director who will coordinate what they do and teach them how to keep and collect data for evaluation. The following recommendations are suggested:

1. Since project services are requested by other than parents of high school-age students, the proposal should be revised to broaden the target population to include parents of younger bilingual children and possibly the older siblings of bilingual children.

2. A method for screening participants should be developed and used at all sites to determine participant eligibility. Once eligibility criteria are agreed upon by all sites, the project should develop more effective procedures for identifying parents, e.g., sending letters to the homes of eligible Title VII-eligible students.

3. Because participants' children are scattered across many city schools, student data collecting would be difficult and impractical. Thus, the proposal should be revised to delete the objectives that 80 percent of

high school-aged children of participants will achieve passing grades and that 80 percent of high school-aged children of participants will demonstrate greater attendance.

4. Not all classes being offered at the Vanderveer Community Catholic Center are sponsored by Project TRAIN. The project might establish better procedures to monitor who is being served and to ensure that the same participants are being served throughout the academic year, September to June.

5. The project coordinator should make an effort to ensure that all record-keeping and data collection necessary to evaluate all program objectives are adequately done. This would enhance the quality of the evaluation conducted and make it more useful in determining program effect.

V. APPENDICES

New York City
Board of Education

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Janine Anastasiadis,

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BILINGUAL EDUCATION

ATTIDUDE SCALE

NAME _____ SCHOOL _____

GRADE _____ DATE _____

Introduction: As a parent-student in the Title VII ESL program, your opinions concerning the bilingual and ESL programs are highly valuable. We would be grateful to you for your help in completing the brief questionaire shown below.

Direction: Please indicate your opinion regarding each of the following statements used in accordance with the scale depicted below as a point of reference.

Please use numbers only.

SCALE

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

New York City
Board of Education

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(718) 236-3543

Tim Fooh Law,
Project Coordinator
H.S. Title VII Central Programs

(718) 236-3543

	Initial (Sept.-Oct.)	Final (May-June)
A. The Title VII ESL program has helped me to understand the need for bilingual education for Limited English Proficiency students	A._____	A._____
B. The Title VII ESL program has helped me to realize that Bilingual Education increases my child's/children's academic achievements and performances in school.	B._____	B._____
C. The Title VII ESL program has made me realize the need for more bilingual curriculum and instructional materials.	C._____	C._____
D. The Title VII ESL program has made me aware of the effectiveness of Bilingual Education and the need for its support by the Federal Government.	D._____	D._____
E. The Title VII ESL program has improved my English utility skills.	E._____	E._____

New York City
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SCALE OF PUPIL PROBLEMS AND NEEDS

NAME _____ SCHOOL _____

GRADE _____ DATE _____

Introduction: As a parent-student in the Title VII ESL program, your opinions concerning the bilingual and ESL programs are highly desirable. We would be grateful to you for your help in completing the brief questionaire shown below.

Direction: Please indicate your opinion regarding each of the following statements using in accordance with the scale depicted below as a point of reference.

Please use numbers only.

SCALE

5	4	3	2	1
Strongest agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongest disagree

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Tim Fooh Law,
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H.S. Title VII Central Programs

(718) 236-3543

		Initial (Sept.-Oct)	Final (May-June)
I.	The Title VII ESL program has helped me to detect my child's difficulties and weaknesses in the subject/content-areas	I. _____	I. _____
2.	The Title VII ESL program has made me aware of the special bilingual needs of my child/ children.	2. _____	2. _____
3.	The Title VII ESL Programs has helped to increase my interest and involvement in my children's education and school activities.	3. _____	3. _____
4.	The Title VII ESL program has assisted me in my investigation and selection of the appropriate high school and college for my child/ children.	4. _____	4. _____
5.	The Title VII ESL program helped me to reinforce what my child/children learn(s) in school.	5. _____	5. _____
6.	The Title VII ESL program has taught me how to help my child/children achieve a sense of themselves.	6. _____	6. _____
7.	The Title VII ESL program has helped me to understand my child's relationship with his/ her peers.	7. _____	7. _____
8.	The Title VII ESL program has helped me to understand my child's relationships with his/ her teachers and other school personnel.	8. _____	8. _____
9.	The Title VII ESL program has helped me to assist my child in obtaining more career information from public and non-public organization's.	9. _____	9. _____
10.	The Title VII ESL program has helped me to obtain more information about job training programs for my child.	10. _____	10. _____